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Letter from D. W. Lee to Anna Clemson, 1864 January 8

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Recommended Citation

"Letter from D. W. Lee to Anna Clemson, 1864 January 8" (1864). *Thomas Green Clemson Papers, Mss 2*. 1055.

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Geneva Jan. 8th 1864

My dear Madam

I have
your letter of 30th ult., which
should have received earlier attention
had it reached me earlier.

The business part of it, I
can not answer with precision
until I reach New York, which
I expect to do some time next
week, and will then reply
at large to your questions.

You begin (very unfairly) by
an apology for writing me,
when you know your letters
are always received with pleasure,
and (when I am at home) an-
swered with promptness.

I have frequently asked myself

whether you and Floride were
spending your Winter as
solitarily as you did the last
one, and am very much
gratified to see by your letter
that you are not. Much
solitude I do not think
mentally healthy for any
one, and especially, for you
labouring under constant anxiety,
or for her who needs some
^(not too much) degree of life and excitement
to be well. The more she sees
of the world, the better she will
appreciate (and this word in its
true meaning of exactly valuing)
her own advantages as well as
defects. In solitude, one or the
other is almost sure to be over-
estimated - often both; and in
the latter case, I have seen
some curious examples of un-

usual diffidence and overweening
arrogance in the same man.

But, adieu to preaching, as
I would call it.

You see by my address, that
I am, where I spent the
happiest years of my life,
but the scenes of youth I
do not think are often
reviewed with pleasure. The
friends we had are dead, or
removed into other places, or
have formed new relations, and
we find in everything we find
(nature excepted. See the Philosophy of D. W. H.)
"that a new king had arisen
who knew not Joseph."

Snow is around me on all sides
and it is a dull winter day
when the fireside is more
cheerful than outdoors, and
as I am staying with good friends

with whom during my eight
years absence, I have maintained
friendly relations, I ought to
write a pleasant letter, but
feel that I am not doing so.
By the way, Mr Oakeschick
called at my office when I was
out, and called at No 78, when
I was at my office, and to my
regret I did not see him, and
as he left no address on his
card at either place I was
unable to find him and show
him the civility that it would
have given me pleasure to extend
to him. Please say so to him
with my regards.

Present me very kindly to
Floride and accept for yourself
the best wishes of your friend and
Mrs A C Clemens
Weymouth
Prince George Co
Md

J W Lee

P. S. Kind remembrances to Mrs
Doub and Frida - also to Mr and
Mrs Crawford.

Lee